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Mr Arfon Jones  
Police and Crime Commissioner  
North Wales Police  
Glan Y Don  
Colwyn Bay  
LL29 8AW

Date: 23 January 2017  
Our ref: HVT/2673/caf  
Page: 1 of 3

Dear Arfon

## Public Accounts Committee – Review of community safety in Wales

I am writing with regard to your letter of January 13<sup>th</sup> to the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee in respect of the above. There are a number of remarks in your letter which I feel it would be helpful for me to comment on and bring to your attention, given your election to the office of Police and Crime Commissioner came mid-way through delivery of this study.

Firstly, you note that *“the focus of the report is very much on crime and did not consider the wider areas of Community Safety. To successfully review Community Safety in Wales all aspects of this subject should have been reviewed”*. The focus of the report is not based solely on crime and in fact refers to a number of areas and some good practice examples which are not directly related to crime. The evidence gathered was from a large number of stakeholders including those who work directly with community safety partnerships and judges the priorities set by organisations and how well they work together to address these.

You also note that *“the report appears to contain a one dimensional approach to volume crime which fails to take into account the wider investment in the vulnerability agenda, including cyber-crime, Modern Slavery and Child Sexual Exploitation, amongst others, where significant investments and improvements have been seen”*. The study was focussed on reviewing whether Welsh Government, Police and Crime Commissioners and Community Safety Partnerships are working effectively together. This was set out in the project brief provided to all bodies and I attach

a copy for your information. You will see that the focus of the study is clearly set out in paragraphs 11 and 12 and is concentrated on reviewing the “*effectiveness of leadership, accountability, planning and delivery of community safety in Wales*”.

You state that “*given the report’s focus on crime, it is disappointing that no police officers or police staff were included within the consultation process. The outcome of that lack of engagement is a report that demonstrates a lack of appreciation as to the existing statutory framework and the responsibilities that lie with me as the Police & Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and other agencies*”.

The proposed Local Government study for community safety was provided to public bodies, including statutory partners within community safety partnerships. With regard to North Wales Police specifically, the project brief for the study was provided to the North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner and Police Force in July 2015 and was discussed beforehand with both the Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales and Deputy Chief Constable of North Wales Police in March 2015. These discussions resulted in agreement on the staff the Wales Audit Office would interview as part of the study.

Further to this, in the 2015 local Audit Plan I outlined my performance audit work programme and noted this would include a review of the effectiveness of the Commissioner’s collaboration and partnership arrangements, including the work of community safety partnerships. My Annual Audit Letter to the Police & Crime Commissioner for North Wales and Chief Constable of North Wales Police published in November 2015 provided an update against these commitments and included in paragraph 15 a short summary of progress on the community safety study.

In addition to and during our fieldwork at North Wales, we interviewed the then Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and the Commissioner’s Commissioning Officer as well as a number of police officers, Fire officers, Health Trust officers and other Community Safety Partnership members including several members of the North Wales Safer Communities Board. We also surveyed members of individual Community Safety Partnerships in North Wales. Finally, we also provided each Police Force area with a specific local report, including North Wales, which was cleared and finalised with North Wales Police and issued in November 2016.

You further note that the report “*consequently fails to engage Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) and others and also the plethora of performance information and data available including most obviously the Crime Survey England & Wales*”. Wales Audit staff informed HMIC of the study on 17th July 2015. Wales Audit staff liaised regularly with HMIC to minimise the risk of overlap with work they are undertaking or planning.

Finally, your comment that “*there are a number of examples of how I and North Wales Police engage with partners to deliver a range of community safety initiatives, many of which are included within the Safer Communities Board Regional Plan*”. The report highlighted the positive work of the Safer Communities Board (page 23 paragraph 1.27 of my report) and we include a range of initiatives and approaches delivered in North Wales as good practice examples where they relate to community safety matters. For instance, work in Wrexham, Denbighshire and Conwy set out on page 78 of my report. These are all examples of wider community safety improvement work.

A copy of this letter, as yours, goes to Nick Ramsay AM.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Huw Vaughan Thomas'.

**HUW VAUGHAN THOMAS**  
**AUDITOR GENERAL FOR WALES**

*Enc: Project Brief – All Wales Local Government Improvement Study: Community Safety Partnerships*

*cc: Mr Nick Ramsay AM, Chair, Public Accounts Committee*



# All Wales Local Government Improvement Study: Community Safety Partnerships

## Project Brief

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# Status of document

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This document was produced by Duncan Mackenzie and Gareth Jones.

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# Project Brief

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## Background to the study

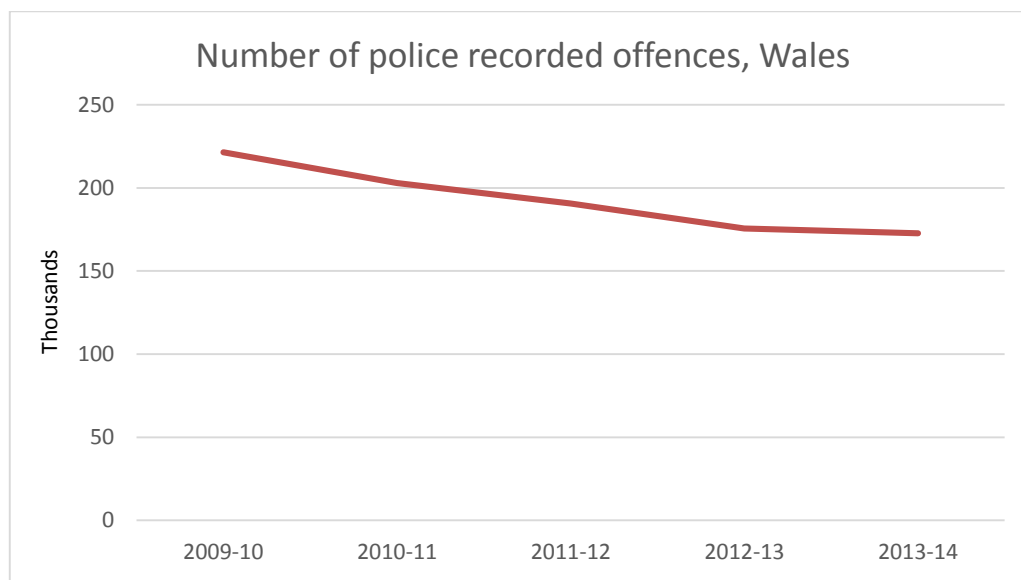
1. In a recent letter to local government chief executives, the Auditor General set out his programme of all Wales local government studies for 2015-16. Following consultation, the Auditor General decided that one of his studies would focus on Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). This project brief sets out why we are undertaking the study and outlines its focus and the methodology, outputs and timing.

## The purpose of the study

2. Community safety is a complex issue that relates to people's sense of personal security and their feeling of ease in the places that they live, work and spend leisure time. It affects how they value their neighbourhood and it plays a major part in influencing whether a neighbourhood is a good or bad place to live. Exhibit 1 shows that across Wales, the number of recorded offences has fallen by 50,000 in the last four recorded years, from 221,000 in 2009-10 to 172,000 in 2013-14.

### Exhibit 1: The number of recorded offences has fallen between 2009-10 and 2013-14

The number of recorded offences is falling in Wales.



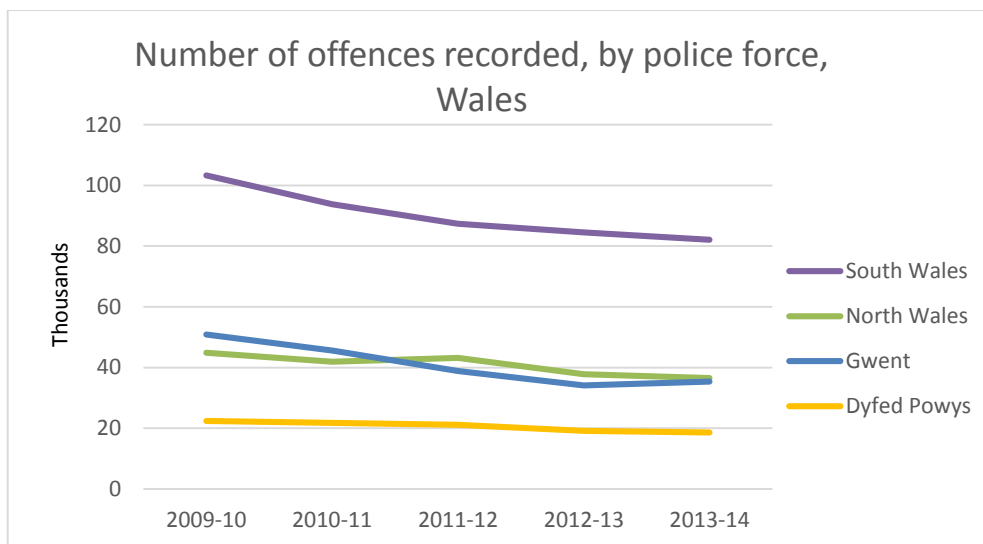
Source: Office for National Statistics, *Crime in England and Wales*.

3. This decrease in recorded crime between 2009 and 2014 has occurred in all four Welsh police force areas, with the largest percentage drop being in Gwent. However, Gwent also recorded a slight increase in recorded crime in 2013-14.

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**Exhibit 2: The number of recorded offences has fallen in all four police force areas from 2009-10 to 2013-14**

All Welsh Police Forces have seen a fall in recorded crime.



Source: Office for National Statistics, *Crime in England and Wales*.

4. However, the rates of improvement are decreasing and in some forms of crime (for example domestic abuse, sexual crime and hate crime) are increasing according to the very latest data. This highlights the importance of good data and real time decision making to ensure performance is focussed on addressing the key priorities.
5. Community Safety Partnerships are statutory bodies under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. By law, all CSPs must include membership from five 'responsible authorities' – Police; Local authority; Fire and Rescue authority; Probation; and Local Health Boards. Community Safety Partnerships have a statutory duty to work together to:
  - reduce reoffending;
  - tackle crime and disorder;
  - tackle anti-social behaviour;
  - tackle alcohol and substance misuse; and
  - tackle any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the local environment.
6. Policing and crime is not a devolved issue, so legislation made in Westminster applies to Wales. However, CSPs can function differently in Wales to England. The role and function of CSPs can be transferred to the Local Service Board, and the reporting requirements of CSPs can be assumed into single integrated plans at a local level. Community Safety Partnerships can also cover more than one local authority area, as in Gwynedd and the Isle of Anglesey.



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7. The Welsh Government has prioritised its community safety work through Theme 10 of its Programme for Government<sup>1</sup>, which outlines four core areas of focus:
    - reducing the level of crime and fear of crime;
    - reducing harms associated with substance misuse;
    - reduction and prevention of youth offending; and
    - improving safety in communities.
  8. The varied way that CSPs can be structured, the complication of a non-devolved function, the impact of austerity and reduced budgets to all areas of the public sector have made the landscape in which CSPs operate challenging.
  9. However, the impact of crime and the fear of crime on people's lives are so great that the structures put in place to tackle this must be given the best chance to succeed. Community Safety Partnerships are the primary tool at a local level for achieving this reduction in crime and the fear of crime. Community Safety Partnerships can utilise the expertise and resources of a number of public sector organisations and have the ability to allocate large amounts of the public purse to the development and implementation of local strategic priorities. Community Safety Partnerships also have a statutory duty through legislation to work towards a number of goals. Therefore, it is in the public's interest that the effectiveness of CSPs and the impact of their work in delivering improvement within their communities are assessed.

## Focus of the study

10. Community Safety Partnerships operate in a complex network of relationships and roles, with leadership, accountability and delivery spread across Welsh Government, Police and Crime Commissioners and local authorities. The role of different organisations on different issues adds a further complication to what is a very complex operating environment. This makes it difficult to quantify who is responsible and accountable for community safety and it is not always clear how local priorities have been shaped by public and stakeholder engagement, especially in long-term planning.
11. Our proposed study will therefore look at the effectiveness of leadership, accountability, planning and delivery of community safety in Wales. This study will make no judgement on the level or appropriateness of Home Office funding but will consider the Welsh Government's leadership and policy role, together with the way it uses funding to target and deliver community safety initiatives. The four Welsh Police and Crime Commissioners will also be reviewed, as well as the role of local authorities. The study will review the effectiveness and impact of joint working at a national, regional and local level in delivering improvement. It will focus on outcomes and will refer to CSPs working elsewhere in the UK.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://gov.wales/about/programmeforgov/?lang=en>

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12. We will also look at funding for CSPs. Community Safety Partnerships are becoming increasingly reliant on charitable and Welsh Government grants, as opposed to pooling budgets through the integration of partners' workstreams. Accessing new funding streams is important because of the cuts made to Home Office and other community safety budgets. Community Safety Partnerships have a statutory function and complex issues to tackle, but with little resource. Partnerships can often be seen as a 'soft option' for cuts in local authority provision.
  13. We will look at how CSPs have managed to maintain their function and role with less resource and more demands placed on the time of officers. Community Safety Partnerships have 155 performance indicators to report on, as well as establishing links with the relevant sections in Programme for Government and other local strategic plans. We will look at how CSPs use these performance indicators and other data to identify local priorities, measure impact, raise the public's understanding of community safety, and link with other Partnerships, strategies and action plans operating within their areas.
  14. We will also look at how CSPs are preparing for the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, and the changes this will bring to the planning, responsibility and monitoring of community safety at a local level in Wales.

## Key Study Question

15. The study is seeking to answer the following main question: **Are Welsh Government, Police and Crime Commissioners and Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) working effectively together to tackle crime and other public safety issues that have a negative effect on people's wellbeing?**

## Methods

16. The fieldwork will be carried out between July 2015 and October 2015 and will include:
  - A survey of members of all 20 CSPs in Wales.
  - A national survey open to all citizens in Wales to give their views about community safety leadership and engagement by CSPs with local communities in setting priorities.
  - Interviews with other key stakeholders including:
    - Welsh Government;
    - the four Police and Crime Commissioners;
    - the Home Office Crime Team for Wales;
    - National Offender Management Service;
    - Probation Services;
    - Welsh Local Government Association; and
    - voluntary and third sector partners such as Victim Support.

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- A literature review of relevant plans, strategies and other outputs from all CSPs, Police and Crime Commissioners and Welsh Government.
  - An assessment of the financial position of CSPs. This will focus on the resources available to manage the CSPs themselves, resources directed towards meeting the aims and objectives of the CSPs, and any resources accessed from external sources by the CSP (for example, grants and charitable funding).
  - Additionally, we will carry out detailed fieldwork in six local authority areas:
    - Wrexham;
    - Conwy and Denbighshire;
    - Ceredigion;
    - Bridgend;
    - Swansea; and
    - Cardiff.
- 17.** All fieldwork will be delivered by Wales Audit Office staff. All fieldwork will be set up through the project support officer (contact details below) and the local Wales Audit Office regulatory teams will be notified of the fieldwork.

## Interviewees

- 18.** In each of the six fieldwork CSPs we wish to interview the following officers. We estimate that a maximum of one and a half hours will be required for each interview. The fieldwork team will be based in each CSP area for one week.

Level	Interviewees
Community Safety Partnership	Chair and a selection of responsible authority members of CSPs – Police; Local authority; Fire and Rescue authority; Probation and Local Health Board. Police and Crime Commissioner Local Authority Member with portfolio responsibility CSP co-ordinators and officers Directors, Heads of Service and officers with community safety responsibility Police and Crime Panel representatives

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19. At a national level, we will be interviewing representatives of the following organisations.

Level	Interviewees
National	Welsh Government Welsh Local Government Association Association of Chief Police Officers Cymru Association of Community Safety Officers/ CSPs Home Office Crime Team for Wales National Offender Management Service Wales Community Rehabilitation Company National Probation Service Wales Youth Justice Board Wales Citizens Advice Cymru Welsh Council for Voluntary Action Alcohol and substance misuse charities Welsh Women's Aid Victim Support Age Cymru Race Equality First Crimestoppers Cymru

## Outputs

20. The outputs for this work will include:
- a national report on the findings from the local government study;
  - a short summary of key findings for PCC areas covering regional issues and variations; and
  - work with key stakeholders to promote and disseminate our key findings on completion of the study.

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## Timing

21. An indicative timetable for undertaking the work and producing the local and national outputs is set out below:

Activity	Timetable
Distribution of study brief to Councils, Police and Crime Commissioners and Welsh Government	July 2015
Police and Crime Commissioners fieldwork	July 2015 to September 2015
National level fieldwork	July 2015 to September 2015
Community Safety Partnership and council fieldwork	September 2015 to December 2015
On line surveys	August 2015 to October 2015
Drawing conclusions	January 2016
Drafting National Report	March 2016
Clearance	May 2016
Publish National Report	June 2016
Dissemination of key findings with partners and stakeholders	June 2016 onwards

## Study Team Contacts

22. The contacts for the Wales Audit Office study team are as follows:

<b>Project Manager</b>	<b>Performance Auditor</b>	<b>Performance Auditor</b>
Nick Selwyn <a href="mailto:Nick.selwyn@audit.wales">Nick.selwyn@audit.wales</a> Telephone: 02920 320 500 Mobile: 07815 955389	Duncan Mackenzie <a href="mailto:Duncan.mackenzie@audit.wales">Duncan.mackenzie@audit.wales</a> Telephone: 02920 320 500 Mobile: 07773 945181	Gareth Jones <a href="mailto:GarethP.jones@audit.wales">GarethP.jones@audit.wales</a> Telephone: 02920 320 500 Mobile: 07970 737433
<b>Project Support Officer</b>	<b>Performance Audit Lead for Police work</b>	<b>Contractor</b>
Emily Owen <a href="mailto:Emily.owen@audit.wales">Emily.owen@audit.wales</a> Telephone: 02920 320 500	Andy Bruce <a href="mailto:Andy.bruce@audit.wales">Andy.bruce@audit.wales</a> Telephone: 07919 164779	Steve Frank <a href="mailto:steve@collinsfrank.com">steve@collinsfrank.com</a> Telephone: 07876 144846

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## Document and key contact request

23. The following is a list of suggested documents that we would wish to review. The list is not exhaustive and we will be informed by discussions with CSPs, Police and Crime Commissioners' offices and local authorities:

Document
Annual Community Safety review for 2013-14 and 2014-15
Current Community Safety plan/strategy
Community Safety Partnership scheme of delegation and constitution
Funding information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grants for community safety work;</li><li>• CSP budgets;</li><li>• Police and Crime Commissioner budgets for community safety work; and</li><li>• Welsh Government funding on community safety work.</li></ul>

24. Please submit all documents to [emily.owen@audit.wales](mailto:emily.owen@audit.wales) by Friday 10 July 2015.
25. In addition, we request that each Council and Police and Crime Commissioner's Office provide a key contact for liaison and engagement purposes with the Wales Audit Office for this study. Those contact details should be provided to [emily.owen@audit.wales](mailto:emily.owen@audit.wales) by **Friday 10 July 2015**.

## Regulatory Team Contacts

26. The Wales Audit Office Regulatory Team contacts are as follows:

Local Government Region and Police Authority	Councils	Wales Audit Office contacts for the region
South East Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Newport</li> <li>Torfaen</li> <li>Monmouthshire</li> <li>Blaenau Gwent</li> <li>Caerphilly</li> <li>Cardiff</li> </ul>	Non Jenkins – <a href="mailto:non.jenkins@audit.wales">non.jenkins@audit.wales</a> David Wilson – <a href="mailto:david.wilson@audit.wales">david.wilson@audit.wales</a> Martin Gibson – <a href="mailto:martin.gibson@audit.wales">martin.gibson@audit.wales</a> Chris Pugh – <a href="mailto:chris.pugh@audit.wales">chris.pugh@audit.wales</a> Lisa Williams – <a href="mailto:lisa.williams@audit.wales">lisa.williams@audit.wales</a>
Mid and West Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RCT</li> <li>Powys</li> <li>Merthyr</li> <li>Ceredigion</li> <li>Carmarthenshire</li> <li>Pembrokeshire</li> </ul>	Colin Davies – <a href="mailto:colin.davies@audit.wales">colin.davies@audit.wales</a> Justine Morgan – <a href="mailto:justine.morgan@audit.wales">justine.morgan@audit.wales</a> Jeremy Evans – <a href="mailto:jeremy.evans@audit.wales">jeremy.evans@audit.wales</a> Tim Buckle – <a href="mailto:timothy.buckle@audit.wales">timothy.buckle@audit.wales</a>
North Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anglesey</li> <li>Conwy</li> <li>Denbighshire</li> <li>Flintshire</li> <li>Gwynedd</li> <li>Wrexham</li> </ul>	Huw Lloyd Jones – <a href="mailto:huw.lloydjones@audit.wales">huw.lloydjones@audit.wales</a> Gwilym Bury – <a href="mailto:gwilym.bury@audit.wales">gwilym.bury@audit.wales</a> Paul Goodlad – <a href="mailto:paul.goodlad@audit.wales">paul.goodlad@audit.wales</a> Nigel Griffiths – <a href="mailto:nigel.griffiths@audit.wales">nigel.griffiths@audit.wales</a> Andy Bruce – <a href="mailto:andy.bruce@audit.wales">andy.bruce@audit.wales</a>
South Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vale</li> <li>Bridgend</li> <li>NPT</li> <li>Swansea</li> </ul>	Steve Barry – <a href="mailto:steve.barry@audit.wales">steve.barry@audit.wales</a> Samantha Clements – <a href="mailto:samantha.clements@audit.wales">samantha.clements@audit.wales</a>
Police and Crime Commissioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dyfed-Powys Police</li> <li>Gwent Police</li> <li>North Wales Police</li> <li>South Wales Police</li> </ul>	Andy Bruce – <a href="mailto:andy.bruce@audit.wales">andy.bruce@audit.wales</a>

27. The Regulatory team has responsibility for overall delivery of the Wales Audit Office programme of performance audit work at each council. With regards to this particular study, engagement will be coordinated by the study team and all liaison should take place with the study team as set out in paragraph 22 above.





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